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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/C
STATE FOR S/USSES
NSC FOR GAVIN
SECDEF FOR DASD HUDDLESTON
ABUJA FOR POL
LONDON FOR POL - LORD
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SUBJECT: FORMIN SAYS CHAD PUSHING TO NORMALIZE WITH SUDAN,
USG SUDAN STRATEGY SOUND, DEBY TO MEET GRATION IN ABUJA

REF: A. STATE 109669

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SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (SBU) FM Moussa Faki Mahamat told Ambassador and DCM October 27 that Chad was "perfectly serious" about pursuing normalization with Sudan; still talking to Sudan about confidence-building measures and normalizing relations along lines agreed during Dr. Ghazi Salahuddin's visit last month; and awaiting the GOS's cantonment of Chadian rebels and promised invitation for Faki to visit Khartoum to move the process to conclusion. Faki said that Deby's decision to move the Oure Cassoni refugee camp away from the border was meant as a clear signal to the GOS that Chad was serious about normalization, and to the JEM that their welcome in Chad was wearing out. Faki reiterated that he was hoping for an equally "strong signal" from Sudan. Faki said that he would accompany President Deby to the AU Peace and Security Council meeting in Abuja. The GOC was preparing for a Deby-Graton meeting there and would take the Abuja opportunity to consult with Sudanese counterparts, including Ghazi Salahuddin, in the hope of speeding up the bilateral process.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Ambassador briefed Faki on the USG's new Sudan Strategy, underlining the novel elements -- prioritized full CPA implementation, a shorter timeline, and new benchmarks, incentives and disincentives. Ambassador briefed Faki on his own visit to Eastern Chad last week, emphasizing the very good collaboration between GOC local officials, MINURCAT, Humanitarian IOs and NGOs. Faki approved Ambassador's goal of talking soon to rebel and opponent returnees like Soubiane and Goukouni, but noted that Soubiane was busy re-integrating his fighters into Chadian life and that Goukouni was not in Chad at the moment.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The GOC has proved as good as its (very carefully

chosen) word regarding the current bilateral Chad-Sudan normalization process and its outreach to former rebels and regime opponents, as reftels make clear. Deby's engagement on courses of action recommended to him by senior USG officials since February of 2008, and now with SE Gration, has resulted in progress toward restoring regional stability, both in terms of Chad-Sudan detente and JEM as a Chadian proxy. We're not there yet, and we prefer to make predictions after the fact, but Chad-Sudan normalization, and a JEM-less Chad, are more possible now than a few months ago.
END SUMMARY.

CHAD-SUDAN DYNAMICS

14. (SBU) Faki reviewed the results of the October 10 meetings in N'Djamena between President Deby and Sudanese Presidential Envoy Ghazi (Ref B), describing the confidence-building measures agreed by the two sides (the "scenario" having been hand-written by Ghazi as he and Faki spoke): Khartoum to canton and restrain remaining Chadian rebels well inside the Sudan border; N'Djamena to "open its eyes" to JEM doings on its territories and "encourage" JEM to return to Darfur, after which Chad was to open its territory, including "former JEM areas of operation" in Eastern Chad to inspection by the Sudanese; and a visit by Faki himself to Khartoum to discuss further mutual steps, which might include mixed patrols on the border and the opening of consulates in Abeche and El Geneina, as envisaged in the bilateral 2006 Protocol. Faki reiterated that Ghazi had said Sudan sought peace, and recalled that the two sides needed proof of

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sincerity -- "just as your Sudan Strategy calls for 'verify, then trust'."

15. (SBU) Faki indicated that he had spoken with Ghazi by phone October 25 for an update on the status of Sudan's efforts with regard to the initial confidence-building measure, cantonment of Chadian rebels still in Sudan. Ghazi had told him that all elements of the GOS were supportive in principle of the measure. Chad was "now awaiting a concrete plan, and hoping for progress." Faki said that Deby's decision to move the Oure Cassoni refugee camp away from the border was meant as a clear signal to the GOS that Chad was serious about normalization, and to the JEM that their welcome in Chad was wearing out. Faki said that Chad hoped for an equally "strong signal" from Sudan. Ambassador noted that he had spoken with JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim the previous week and found him more on the defensive than formerly. Faki rejoined that the GOC had this impression as well.

16. (SBU) Faki confirmed that he would accompany President Deby to the AU's Peace and Security Council meeting in Abuja October 29, and that President Deby was looking forward to a meeting there with S/E Gration. Faki said that he himself intended to meet with Ghazi and others from the Sudan side in Abuja in the hope of spurring progress on the confidence-building measures laid out October 10 in N'Djamena.

CHADIAN REBELS

17. (SBU) Faki said that the Ambassador should feel free to meet with returning Chadian rebel leaders Soubiane and Goukouni but noted that Soubiane was busy re-integrating his fighters into Chadian life and that Goukouni was not in Chad at the moment. Faki said he had been in routine contact with Soubiane October 25, as they worked together on national reconciliation issues. Faki indicated that he was not able to shed light on the supposed "congress" of Chadian rebels organized by Khartoum, which National Mediator Abderahman had previously discussed with us.

SUDAN STRATEGY ROLL-OUT

¶8. (SBU) Ambassador briefed Faki on the elements of the USG's new Sudan Strategy (Ref A), stressing that we felt a sense of urgency to resolve the Darfur conflict and simultaneously to move forward with the CPA process. Faki indicated that the GoC appreciated the "strong ideas" in the document, supported the notion of simultaneous steps on the Darfur and CPA fronts, and was pleased that Sudanese Presidential Envoy Ghazi had had favorable things to say about the U.S. strategy. Faki noted that Chad believed the U.S. had correctly identified the root causes of the Darfur conflict, which included injustice and marginalization of the population, coupled by "usurpation of power" by those not popularly selected. He thanked the U.S. for stating clearly that the time had come for Sudan to "take care of its internal problems" and "find means of getting along with its neighbors," including Chad.

¶9. (SBU) Following the release of the new U.S. Sudan Strategy, "the world was waiting" for Sudan to respond, continued Faki. The U.S. had made its views known. If other UNSC members -- "including Sudan's friends" -- did the same, Sudan might produce concrete proof of its bona fides. President Bashir remained concerned about his indictment by the International War Crimes Tribunal, Faki pointed out, and was perhaps looking for international support for the notion of placing some judges at the Tribunal who were from Sudan. The question of whether justice would have to precede reconciliation or vice versa was an open one, but "Bashir needs to be judged based on the allegations against him," Faki offered.

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COMMENT

¶10. (SBU) The GOC has proved as good as its (very carefully chosen) word regarding the current bilateral Chad-Sudan normalization process and its outreach to former rebels and regime opponents. Deby's engagement on courses of action recommended to him by senior USG officials since February of 2008, and now with SE Gration, has resulted in progress toward restoring regional stability, both in terms of Chad-Sudan detente and JEM as a Chadian proxy. We're not there yet, and we prefer to make predictions after the fact, but Chad-Sudan normalization, and a JEM-less Chad, are more possible now than a few months ago.
NIGRO